

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 18

BY RESOURCES AND CONSERVATION COMMITTEE

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

STATING FINDINGS OF THE LEGISLATURE, REQUESTING THE NATURAL RESOURCES INTERIM COMMITTEE APPOINTED BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TO GATHER INFORMATION AND TO PRESENT FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE LEGISLATURE AND REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENTS OF AGRICULTURE, FISH AND GAME AND LANDS AND THE OFFICE OF SPECIES CONSERVATION TO PROVIDE INFORMATION AND RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE INTERIM COMMITTEE.

Be It Resolved by the Legislature of the State of Idaho:

WHEREAS, Idaho's working forests, ranches and farms provide important benefits to all Idahoans by sustaining Idaho's economy, food and fiber production, the heritage of local communities, habitat for fish and wildlife, intact watersheds for clean water and opportunities to hunt, fish and enjoy the outdoors; and

WHEREAS, working forests, ranches and farms, and the benefits they provide, have been lost to other uses over the past several decades and are expected to continue to do so at a rapid rate; and

WHEREAS, many of Idaho's rural landowners are deeply committed to maintaining agriculture and forestry traditions and to serving as stewards of natural resources and wildlife; and

WHEREAS, Idahoans support protecting working forests, ranches and farms as well as the wildlife, access and other benefits these lands provide.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the members of the First Regular Session of the Sixtieth Idaho Legislature, the House of Representatives and the Senate concurring therein, that the Natural Resources Interim Committee appointed by the Legislative Council is requested to gather information from interested groups and existing resources regarding:

- (1) The extent of conversion of working forests, ranches and farms to other uses;
- (2) The effects of such conversions on local economies, agricultural heritage, timber resources, wildlife habitat and recreational opportunities;
- (3) The strengths and shortcomings of existing programs designed to keep forests, ranches and farms working; and
- (4) The need and opportunity for a suite of state policy tools to:
 - (i) Address the loss of working forests, ranches and farms and to protect the health of fish and wildlife populations;
 - (ii) Provide programs for voluntary enrollment to access forest lands;
 - (iii) Sustain economic contributions of working lands;
 - (iv) Maintain opportunities for outdoor recreation; and
 - (v) Reward good land stewardship.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Natural Resources Interim Committee is requested to seek the view of representatives from forestry, ranching, farming, sporting, conservation, business organizations and the public in gathering the information.

1 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Natural Resources Interim Committee is
2 requested to present its findings and recommendations to the Second Regular Session of the
3 Sixtieth Idaho Legislature.

4 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Agriculture, the Department of
5 Fish and Game, the Department of Lands and the Office of Species Conservation are encour-
6 aged to provide information and recommendations relevant to the Natural Resources Interim
7 Committee's study.